

# **Washington State Patrol**

## **Media Release**

**Chief John Batiste**

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**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

**Date: November 16, 2006**  
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### **WSP DUI Task Force Kicks Off With a Bang**

The WSP kicked off its first of several scheduled holiday DUI emphasis' last night with a dozen DUI arrests in King County. Troopers targeted several geographic areas around the county using statistics compiled by the State Liquor Board that show which establishments have a record of overserving their customers.

The troopers assigned to work the scheduled emphasis will be in addition to the normal patrols that are currently assigned to work the county. These troopers were selected from around King County based on their ability to identify impaired drivers, and will only focus on locating and arresting impaired drivers during the emphasis period.

In addition to the extra troopers, the WSP will also be using Drug Recognition Experts (DREs), which are troopers specially trained to assist in identifying DUI's when the impairment is based on drugs rather than alcohol.

Reducing the number of DUI related collisions is a top priority for the WSP. In 2005, the WSP investigated over 2,600 DUI related collisions in Washington State, 77 of those resulted in a fatality, and over 1,000 of those resulted in an injury. The WSP has dedicated itself to public safety, and throughout this holiday season. The men and women of the State Patrol will be working around the clock to ensure safety on our roadways. In 2005, the WSP made approximately 21,000 impaired driving were arrests, removing these dangerous drivers from the road.

"We know that as long as there are still deaths out on our highways, we have work to do, which is why we will be conducting this emphasis patrol along with many others this holiday season," explained Captain Steve Burns, Washington State Patrol District Commander. "However, stricter laws and enforcement can only go so far to get dangerous drivers off the road, we need your assistance in order to successfully enforce and educate everyone out there. If you or one of your friends/family members have been drinking, don't drive. Use a designated driver, call a friend, a taxi, or a tow truck to get home. While this may be inconvenient, it could save a life."

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The current emphasis will continue through the end of the month. Ride alongs can be scheduled upon request. Please contact Trooper Jeff Merrill at the above phone number if you are interested in scheduling a ride along during this emphasis.